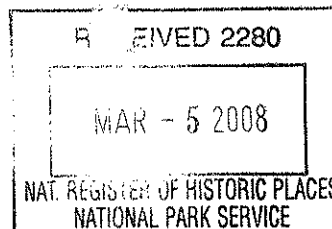


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



OMB No. 10024-0018

302

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Washington Grade School

other names/site number Washington Grade School USD250

2. Location

street & number 209 South Locust Street

☐ not for publication

city or town Pittsburg, Kansas

☐ vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Crawford

code 064 zip code 60762

037 km

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patricia J. Lauer DSHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

2/29/08
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☒ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Love
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

4.16.08

RECEIVED

JUN 16 2008

Washington Grade School
Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-state
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"Historic Public Schools of Kansas"

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:

Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more sheets.)

See Section 7 Continuation Sheets

Washington Grade School

Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significant within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination if individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
- # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
- # _____

Areas of significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1938-1957

Significant Dates

1938

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Thomas W. Williamson & Company, architect
W. K. Martin Construction Company

Washington Grade School
Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5
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3	4	9	2	9	5
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4	1	4	1	1	5	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

2

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4

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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cydney E. Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield

organization Architectural & Historical Research, LLC Date November 7, 2007

street & number 1537 Belleview Avenue telephone 816.472.4154

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Randy Vilela

street & number 103 South Elm telephone 620.231.6350

city or town Pittsburg state KS zip code 66762

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 1

Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas

SUMMARY

Washington Grade School, located at 209 South Locust Street, Pittsburg, Crawford County, Kansas, is a one-story hipped-roof brick building designed by Thomas W. Williamson & Company, a highly successful architectural firm responsible for designing approximately 175 school buildings throughout the state of Kansas. Williamson's design for Washington Grade School is modest in its overall vocabulary: ribboned fenestration, an arched recessed front entrance crowned by a short cupola at the roof's ridge, simple quoining at the end wings of the main façade and at throughout the secondary facades, break the otherwise plain masonry facade. Although Washington Grade School has been modified with modern fenestration and a brick one-story rear extension, its integrity of location, design, materials, setting, workmanship, association and feeling has been retained. As defined in the MPS cover document "Historic Public Schools of Kansas," Washington Grade School is an intact representative example of a "Town Graded School," as it served only the elementary grades.¹ As a one-story U-shaped educational facility with a central auditorium and standard classrooms, it meets the registration requirements as set forth in the MPS. Located to the east of Highway 69, the main thoroughfare of Pittsburg, Washington Grade School lies south of the central business district in the midst of a residential area generally consisting of early 20th century vernacular houses. Today, Washington Grade School stands vacant.

ELABORATION

The main façade of Washington Grade School faces west. A centrally placed recessed main entrance with a wooden arch surround (in fact, the arched end of an eyebrow dormer) features a non-original double-leaf aluminum framed door with a wide single pane transom. Fenestration at the main façade, modified from the original multilight wood sash units, is consistent throughout and features brick headers and sills. The original openings have been retained. The current window configuration is single hung, one-over-one, aluminum framed with fixed transom. Single units flank the main entrance at the west façade, with banks of ribboned windows (five in each display) placed at the end bays of the central unit. The front (west) and interior (north and south) facades of the wings are without articulation except for brick quoining and corbelling.

The fenestration at the north and south facades of the west wings duplicates that of the windows at the main façade and are ribboned with five units. The east face of the south wing also displays this window type and is repeated at the entire south façade of the main unit and the first bay of the rear or east façade. Also at the rear façade, a one-story brick addition (c. 1960s) features two

¹ Brenda R. Spencer, "Historic Public Schools of Kansas." Multiple Property Documentation, National Register of Historic Places, April 22, 2005.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 2

Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas

banks of fixed units with faux muntins. This addition obscures the rear of the original 1937 building's arched windows of the auditorium. A non-original aluminum framed, double-leaf door with wide transom (matching that of the main façade) is placed beneath a wooden canopy, leading to the addition. A two-bay metal overhead door is placed at the north faced of the one-story rear addition. Fenestration of the north façade is the same as the rest of the building where three banks of five units stretch across the exterior.

Other features of Washington Grade School include a metal cupola placed at the roof's main ridge (the roof is asphalt shingle), and a brick chimney, modified from the original taller scheme. The foundation is concrete.

The interior of the facility retains much of its historic integrity in that much of the original historic fabric is intact, as follows: Williamson's modified "U" design, which allowed for maximum light into every classroom, features four large classrooms at the western portion of the building, placed on either side of a small vestibule with a "teacher's room" to the north of the entry and an office to the south. A wide corridor (placed on a north/south axis) separates the front section of the building from the rear, where two classrooms are placed to the north of a large, centered auditorium, while a room specified for "kindergarten" is located to the south. Wide corridors (on an east/west axis) also separate the auditorium from the classrooms. A kitchen and anteroom flank the stage area. Most of the classroom blackboards still remain.

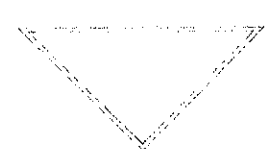
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 3

Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas

WASHINGTON GRADE SCHOOL PITTSBURG KANSAS P.W.A. PROJECT KANSAS NO. 1270 D.S.	
INDEX	
SHEET 1	1. PLOT PLAN
2	2. WEST ELEVATION, SOUTH ELEVATION
3	3. EAST ELEVATION, NORTH ELEVATION
4	4. SECTIONAL WALL & WINDOW DETAILS
5	5. BASEMENT PLAN
6	6. FIRST FLOOR PLAN
7	7. ROOF FRAMING PLAN
8	8. REAR ENTRANCE - TYPICAL BRICK WORK CHIMNEY - T.A. LOUVERS - CONDUCTOR STRAP DETAILS
9	9. CUPOLA DETAIL
10	10. FRONT ENTRANCE DETAILS
11	11. AUDITORIUM - DOOR & FRAMES - DETAIL BOARD DETAILS - DOOR - 100
12	12. WAREHOUSE & TANK DETAIL - STEPS TO STAGE
13	13. WINDOW SCHEDULE - FRONT ENTRANCE E.B.B.
14	14. CORK EXTENSIONER CASKET - DVA SIGN
15	15. BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN
16	16. FIRST FLOOR PLAN
17	17. FOUNDATION PLAN
18	18. FIRST FLOOR FRAMING - LINTELS



THOS W. WILLIAMSON & CO.
1937
PITTSBURG, KANSAS
WASHINGTON GRADE SCHOOL
PITTSBURG, KANSAS

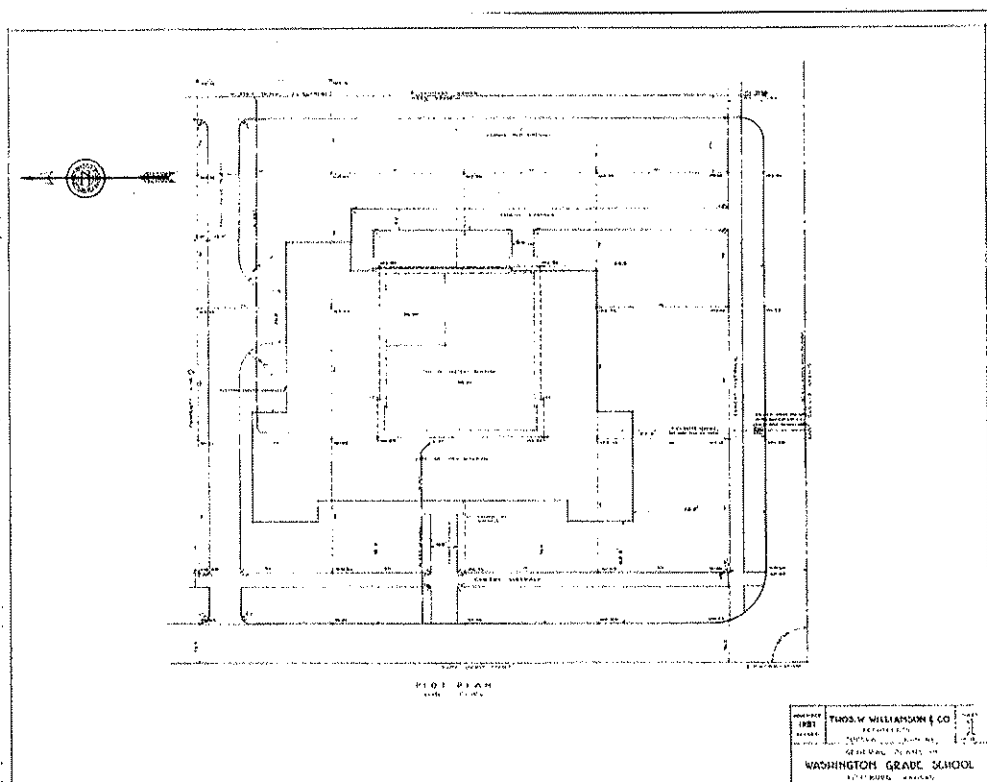
Washington Grade School, Pittsburg, Kansas, 1937:
PWA Project No. 1270 D. S. Index Page

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 4

**Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas**



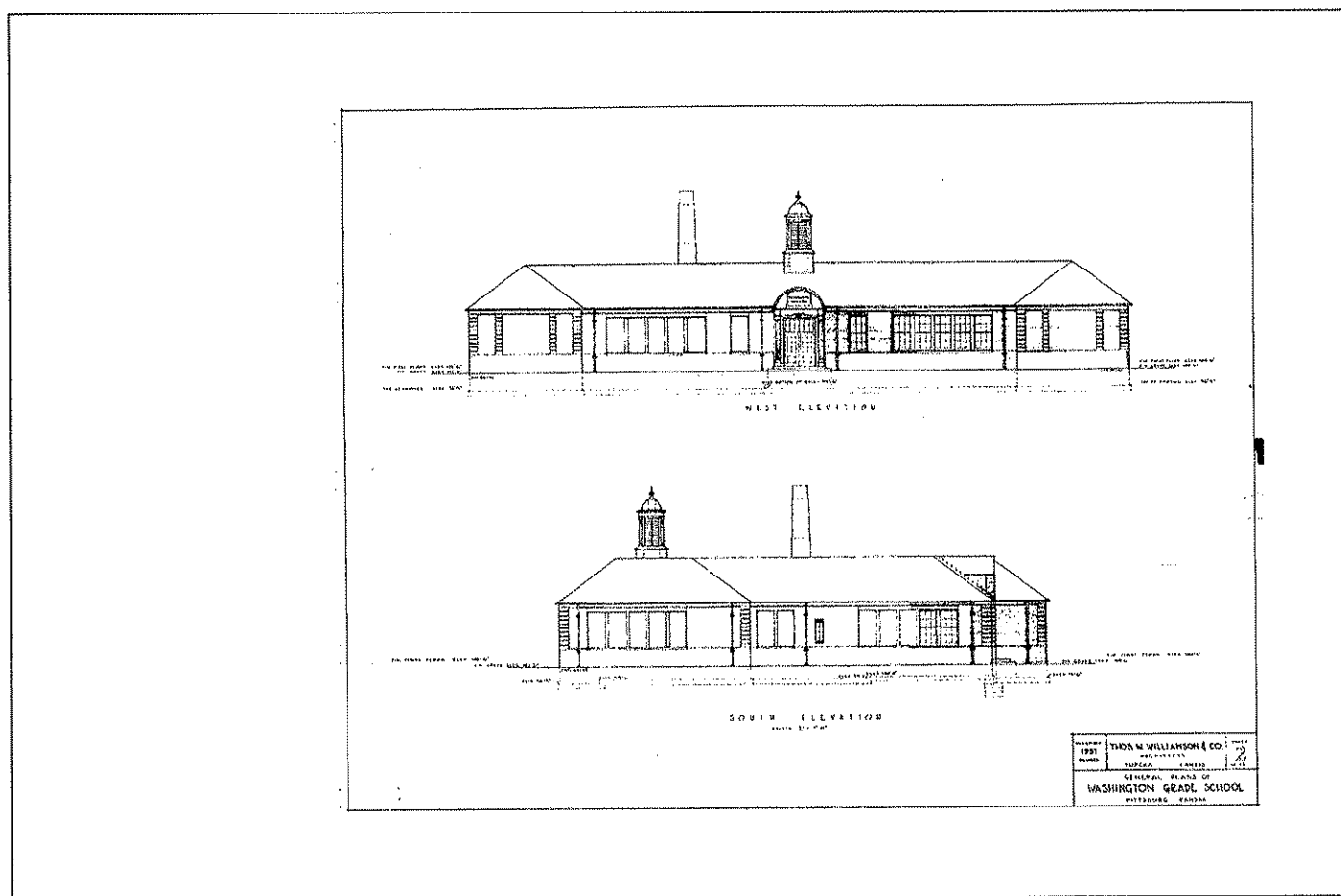
Washington Grade School, Plot Plan, 1937.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 5

**Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas**



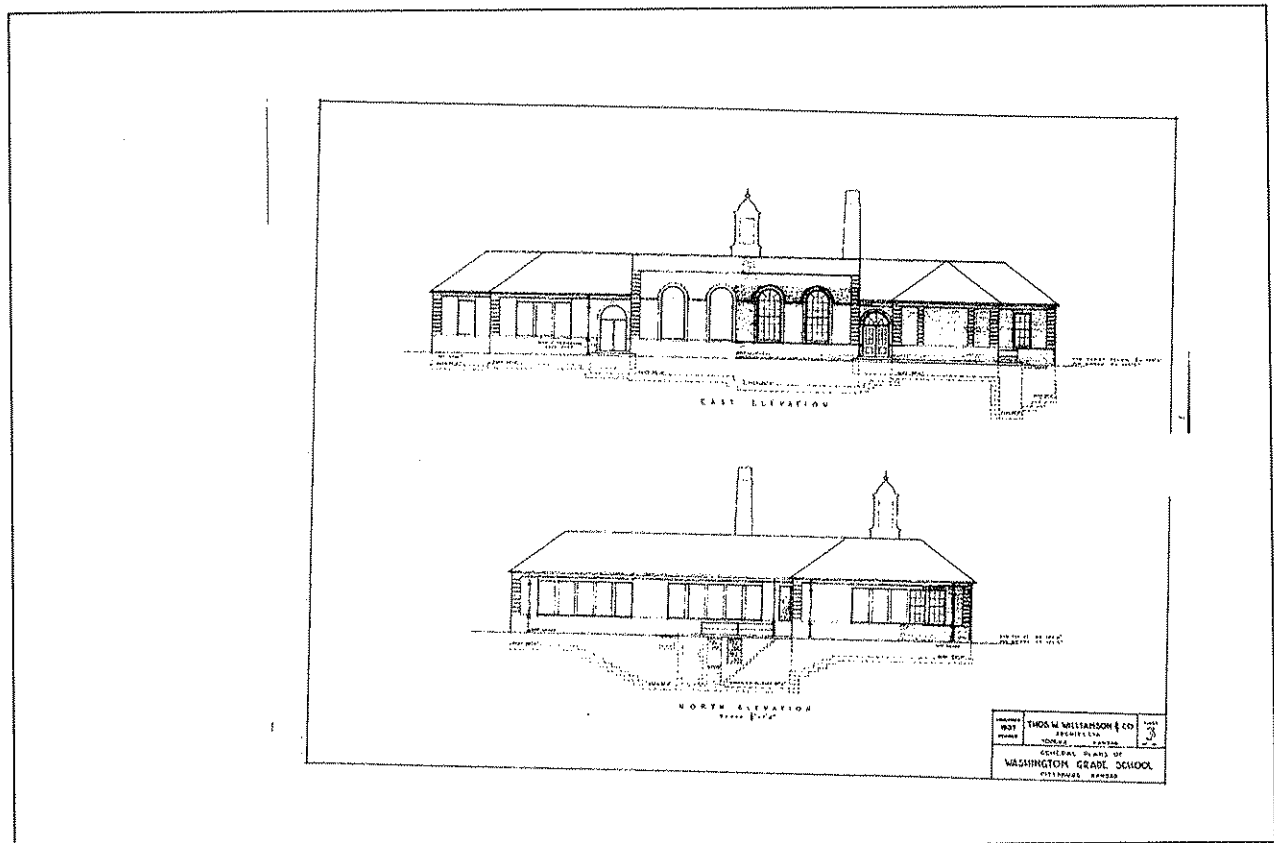
Washington Grade School, west and south elevations, 1937.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 6

**Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas**



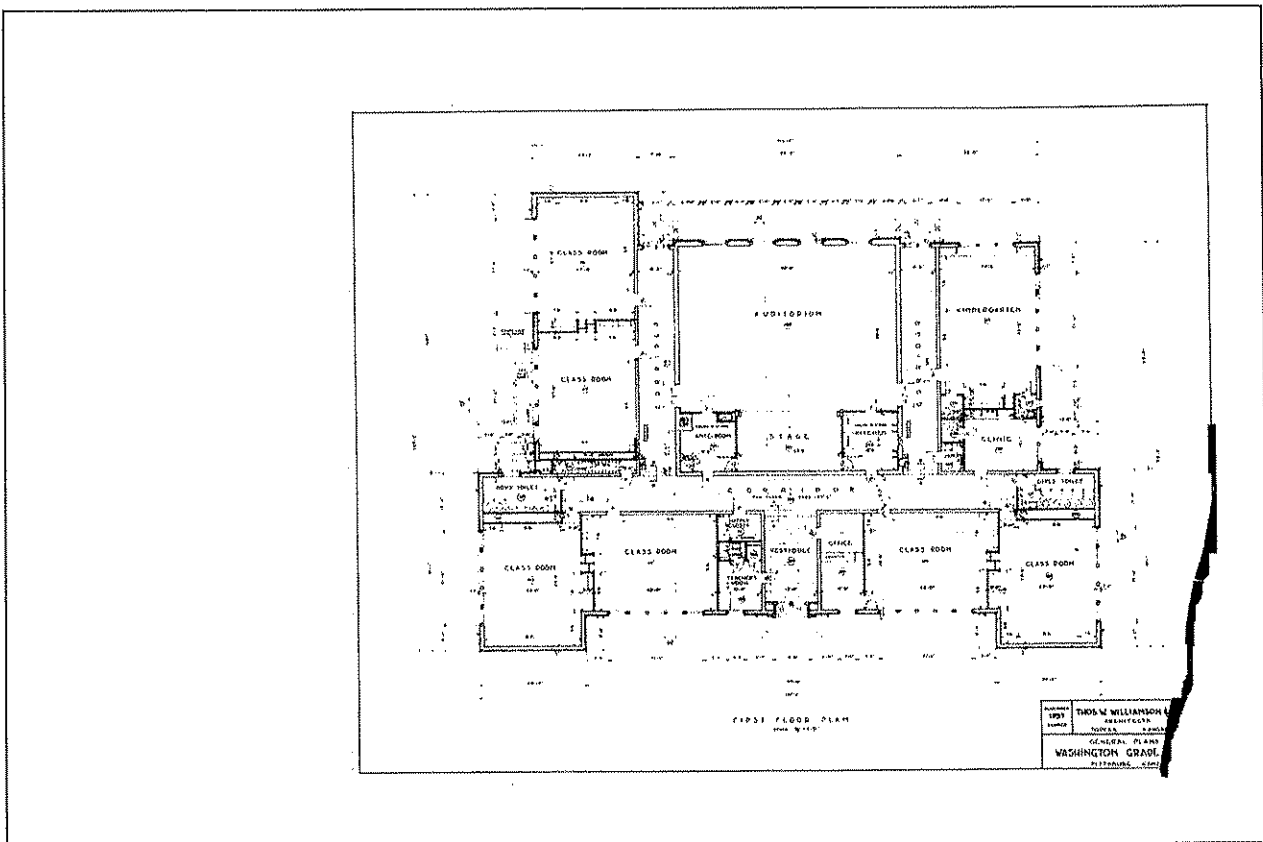
Washington Grade School, east and north elevations, 1937.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section number 7 Page 7

**Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas**



Washington Grade School, First Floor Plan, 1937

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 8

Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas

SUMMARY

The Washington Grade School located at 209 South Locust, Pittsburg, Crawford County, Kansas is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and is locally significant in the following area: EDUCATION. The development of the Washington Grade School coincides within the historic context identified in the MPS Cover Document: "Historic Public Schools of Kansas;" and is representative as an example of a Kansas Public School Building constructed during the New Deal Era (1930-WWII) by the Public Works Administration (PWA) as outlined in the same MPS submitted by Brenda Spencer, April 22, 2005. According to the MPS document, the "PWA (originally the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works), had a significant and unprecedented impact on public schools across the nation." In addition, the grade school was designed by the renowned Topeka, Kansas architectural firm of Thomas W. Williamson & Company. The Washington Grade School replaced the outdated Washington Elementary School, which was built in 1888 at the same location. In 1937 the old Washington Elementary School was razed and a new modern school, partially funded by the PWA (Project No. 1270) as designed by Williamson's firm was constructed. The Washington Grade School is located in the southern end of the city, populated by blue collar workers living in housing built within an industrialized area filled with smelting factories, zinc, lead and coal mining companies, as well as railroad yards. The period of significance is 1937 through 1957, the end date established by the discretionary cut-off period of the National Register of Historic Places.

ELABORATION

Washington Grade School (1937), Pittsburg, Crawford County, Kansas: New Deal Era (1930-WWII)

In 1887 the Pittsburg, Kansas School Board, USD 49 (subsequently, USD 50 and still later USD 250), acquired lots Four and Five of Rogers Coal Company's Second Addition, located on the northeast corner of South Locust and East Euclid (formerly Longwell Avenue). A new brick two-story school house, known as South Pittsburg Public School, was built to serve the growing population of the city. It was the third school to be built within the city limits and was a graded school that served children from the First through Eighth Grade levels of education. In 1901 the school was officially renamed Washington Elementary School and remained in use for the next 37 years serving children from Kindergarten through the Sixth grade.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 9

Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas

In February 1937 the Pittsburg School Board, USD 250, voted unanimously to replace the outdated structure with a new modern facility. The new school, named Washington Grade School was to provide education to children from Kindergarten through sixth Grade. As outlined in the school board minutes, construction began in December 1937 so that the new school was ready for the 1938-1939 School Year that would begin in September 1938.

According to the board minutes, on February 1, 1937, the Board of Education, of the City of Pittsburg, of the State of Kansas School District Number 49 prepared an estimate to build a new elementary school at 209 South Locust Street;

"[W]hereas, the present Washington Grade School Building in the City of Pittsburg Kansas is old, obsolete and inadequate for school purposes and in need of replacement and it has become necessary and desirable that a new Grade School Building be constructed in said city..."²

The original school building, located at 209 South Locust, sat in the center of a heavily industrialized area that contained numerous smelting factories, foundries and mining shafts. The 1888 building had become obsolete in classroom space due to the increased population base of Pittsburg and presented a serious threat to the students as a fire trap without the modern fireproofing methods employed in building methods of the early twentieth century. Although a number of other locations were considered, the final decision was to raze the original building at the same location while acquiring several additional lots to expand the footage needed for the new school building. The cost for a new building was estimated at \$90,000.³ During the same meeting, the Board decided to request, file and make

"...application to the United States of America through the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works for a grant of funds in the amount of...\$40,500.00 for the purpose of aiding in financing the cost of construction and equipping of the said new Grade School Building and additional site therefore... [and that] it is necessary bonds of said Board of Education in the amount of ...\$49,500.00 be issued to finance the cost of constructing and building said new Grade school Building, together with the cost of furnishing the same, and the purchase of additional site therefore, in additions to the funds that may be received from the grant of \$40,500.00 for which it has been applied to

² School Board USD 49 Minutes, February 1, 1937, n.p. Pittsburg, Kansas. Archives. USD250 Pittsburg, Kansas.

³ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas

the United States of America through the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works."⁴

The school board was also seeking funding for a new junior high school building. The total on both buildings was estimated at \$350,000.00, of which the district sought \$192,500.00 in bonds through the process of approval by popular vote. A local election was called by the Pittsburg School Board for April 6, 1937 to approve the amount of \$192,500.00 in bonds, as put forth in the school board minutes. The board unanimously approved the motion on February 22, 1937.⁵

The bond issue was successful and the final stages of approval were in motion by the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works. However, according to school board minutes of October 11, 1937, the Board indicated that a change of policy had taken place after the Board's original application for funding. P. W. Document No. 76857-1 was received by the Pittsburg school board dated October 1, 1937. Rather than making an outright grant to the project the PWA office procedure change called for

"...payment to the grantee of the amount of wages paid to workers on the project certified for relief, and referred for such work by the United States Employment Service or agencies designated by it, plus 15% of such amount so paid by the PWA. In other words, the grant would amount to, and be limited to, 115 percent of the amount paid for wages to workers taken from relief rolls and determined by audit to have been so paid. No grant can be earned in excess of 45 percent of the cost of the project."⁶

At the same meeting it was announced that the old Washington School Building would be razed to make way for construction of the new school. This was completed just prior to the beginning of construction of the new school in December 1937. A decision was made to work out the demolition of the old building with the contractor for the new building and eliminate any use of the WPA.⁷

Thomas W. Williamson was named as the project architect. A contract with Williamson was signed on October 11, 1937. Under the Articles laid out by the school board, Williamson's firm was to be:

⁴ Ibid, n.p.

⁵ School Board USD 49 Minutes, February 22, 1937, n.p. Pittsburg, Kansas. Archives. USD250 Pittsburg, Kansas.

⁶ School Board USD 49 Minutes, October 11, 1937, n.p. Pittsburg, Kansas. Archives. USD250 Pittsburg, Kansas.

⁷ Ibid.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas

"...the primary and principal part in control of the designing, planning and furnishing specifications for the erection and completion of a Washington Grade School Building located in the City of Pittsburg, Kansas. Article Two: The Architect will assist the Owner in filing an application with the PWA and will furnish all Engineering information, preliminary plans, and specifications required by the PWA. The Architect agrees that if the PWA grant is not received the Owner will not be obligated to pay for the services mentioned in this Article. It is agreed, however, that if the PWA grant is received and local finances can be arranged that the Architect will proceed with the architectural work provided in the following contract articles."⁸

The articles that followed laid out the guidelines giving Williamson's firm the responsibility to survey the needs of the district, provide preliminary drawing and sketches of the proposed building with both exterior and interior renditions, including room size, arrangements, cubical content of various rooms, construction materials and an estimated cost. Once approved by the board, Williamson's firm would then furnish full and complete plans with working drawings and specifications including; heating, ventilating, electrical wiring, plumbing and any other specifications required for the erection and completion of the new elementary school. Furthermore, Williamson's firm would act as overseer on the project, as well as furnish the District with monthly progress reports on labor and material costs.⁹

Williamson's compensation was laid out as 2 percent of the project total upon the completion and acceptance by the Owner of a full set of final specifications and plans. One percent of the contract price to be paid when the contracts were let for the new school with the necessary bonds furnished by the contractors and approved by the Architect and the Owner. And finally 2 percent to be paid to the Architect as the work of construction progresses, divided into monthly installments the amount controlled by the amount of work completed by the contractors.¹⁰

By the end of December 1937 all bids for the work on the new school building had been approved and contractors for each phase were announced. W. K. Martin Construction Company of Kansas City, Missouri was named the general contractor on a bid of \$53,939.00. The heating and ventilating contract was awarded to local company, Huff Construction, for \$5000.00. The

⁸ Ibid. Williamson's architectural firm was also contracted to design and oversee the construction of the Roosevelt Junior High School which was also approved for PWA grant monies. Both contracts, with the exception of financing, were identical.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 12

**Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas**

contract, on a bid of \$2,251.00, for plumbing was awarded to Workman Plumbing Company of Parsons, Kansas and Tucker Electric of Topeka, Kansas received the electrical contract on a bid of \$4,248.00.¹¹

Besides razing the the old Washington Elementary School in December 1937, it was necessary to determine what to do with the student body of the current school term and possibly that of 1938-39. To address this issue, the school board determined temporary boundaries. The grade school age children were divided between three other elementary schools; Horace Mann, Central School, Eugene Field and Lakeside School, all schools within the Pittsburg School District. The new Washington Grade School was opened in time for the school year of 1938-39. The final construction cost for Washington Grade School was \$72,895.64. Its completion also marked the last construction of an elementary school in Pittsburg, Kansas until 1951.

Washington Grade School was one of six schools that were in operation in Pittsburg, Kansas School District USD250 in 1938. Unlike many mining towns where the population remains unsteady, the school district and the community at large owned a strong progressive attitude towards the importance of education. As the population increased, the need for more classrooms was never denied to anyone within the community. Education of the child was the priority.¹²

As early as 1886 a plan to build a separate [colored] school was addressed but the African-American students remained in an integrated atmosphere with the rest of the Pittsburg student population. It was not until 1913, by the unanimous decision of all parents within the district, that Douglass School, also known as the Negro School, was constructed.¹³ However, in 1950, Pittsburg closed Douglass School, at which time the remaining African-American students were fully integrated into the Pittsburg School District, well before desegregation was mandated under Brown vs. Board of Education (1954).¹⁴

For over one-hundred years education was a priority on the lot located on the northeast corner of S. Locust and E. Euclid, serving as home to two Washington Grade Schools beginning in 1888 until its transformation into an Adult Education facility in 1980 when the building continued to

¹¹ *Mid-West Contractor* 22 December 1937, 15.

¹² John k. Hay, "Two-Room School Evolved Into Complex System," *The Morning Sun* 20 May 1976 photocopy Pittsburg Genealogical Society Library.

¹³ "Pittsburg Is City of Many Modern Educational Plants," *Kansas Centennial Section 1961*. Reprint in Pittsburg Almanac 1876-1976. Archives, Pittsburg Genealogy Society, Pittsburg Kansas Library.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 13

**Washington Grade School
MPS Listing "Historic Public Schools of Kansas"
Crawford County, Kansas**

serve in that capacity until its sale in 1996. Today the building at 209 South Locust is in sound condition and was used as a storage facility by its current owner. Plans for reuse are currently underway.

Architect: Thomas W. Williamson

As indicated in the MPS cover document, Thomas W. Williamson's architectural firm was one of the key firms responsible for numerous school buildings throughout the State of Kansas. The contract to design and oversee the construction of Washington Grade School was the second of four school buildings that Williamson designed for USD 250 in Pittsburg, Kansas. The other three schools were Pittsburg City School (1926), Roosevelt Junior High School (1939), and Westside Grade School (1950-51). According to the MPS, Williamson is widely known for school designs and is best known for the design of Topeka High School (listed in the National Register, 2005) in Topeka, Kansas, built in 1930. After World War II, Williamson-Loebsack & Associates designed all the buildings erected for the Forbes Air Force Base, south of Topeka.¹⁵

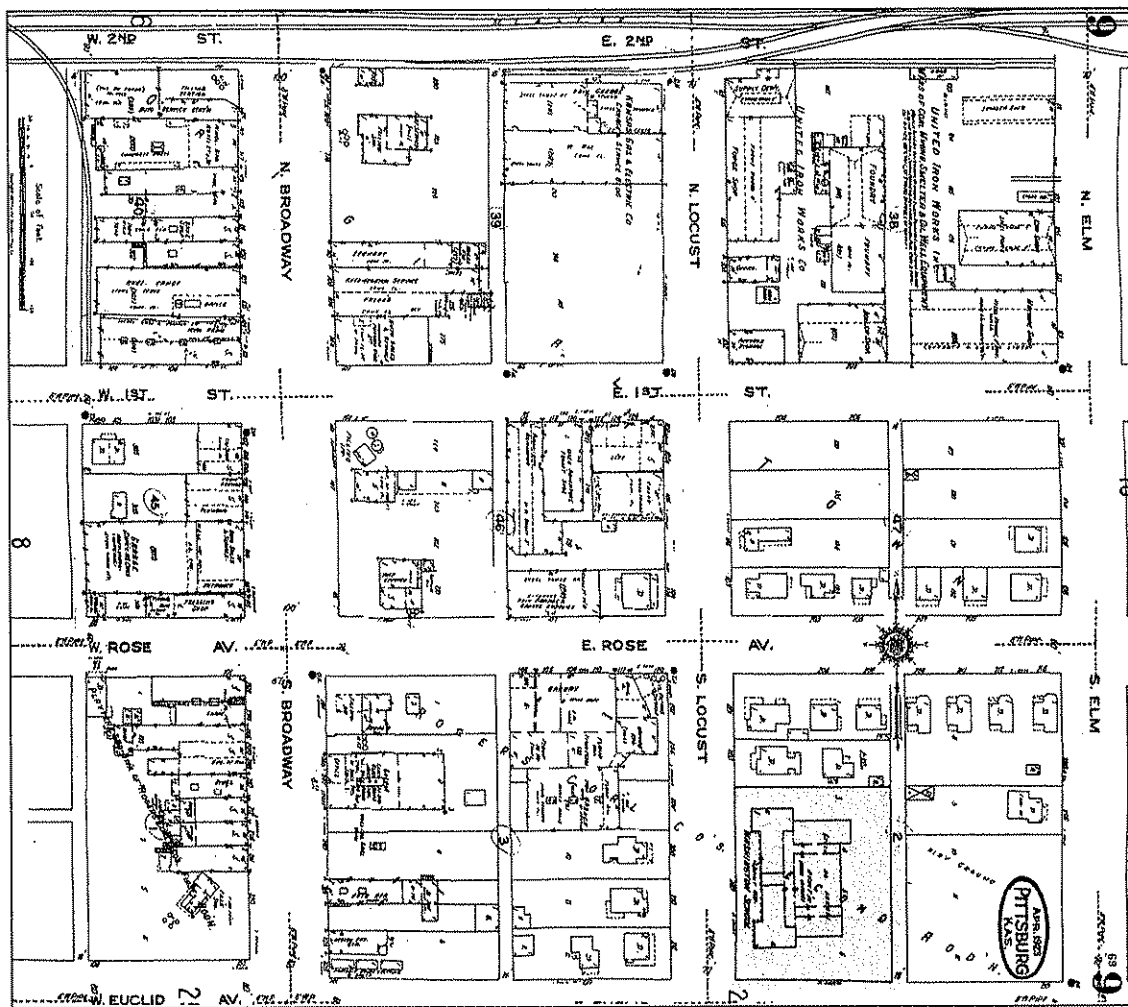
¹⁵ Walter H. Markley, "Thomas W. Williamson," *Builders of Topeka, 1956: Who's Who in the Kansas Capital* (Topeka: Capper Printing Co., 1956), 288.

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Sanborn Insurance Map: Pittsburg, Kansas 1944, Overlay (Orig. 1923), Sheet 9.
Washington Grade School, 209 S. Locust is located in the gray hi-light

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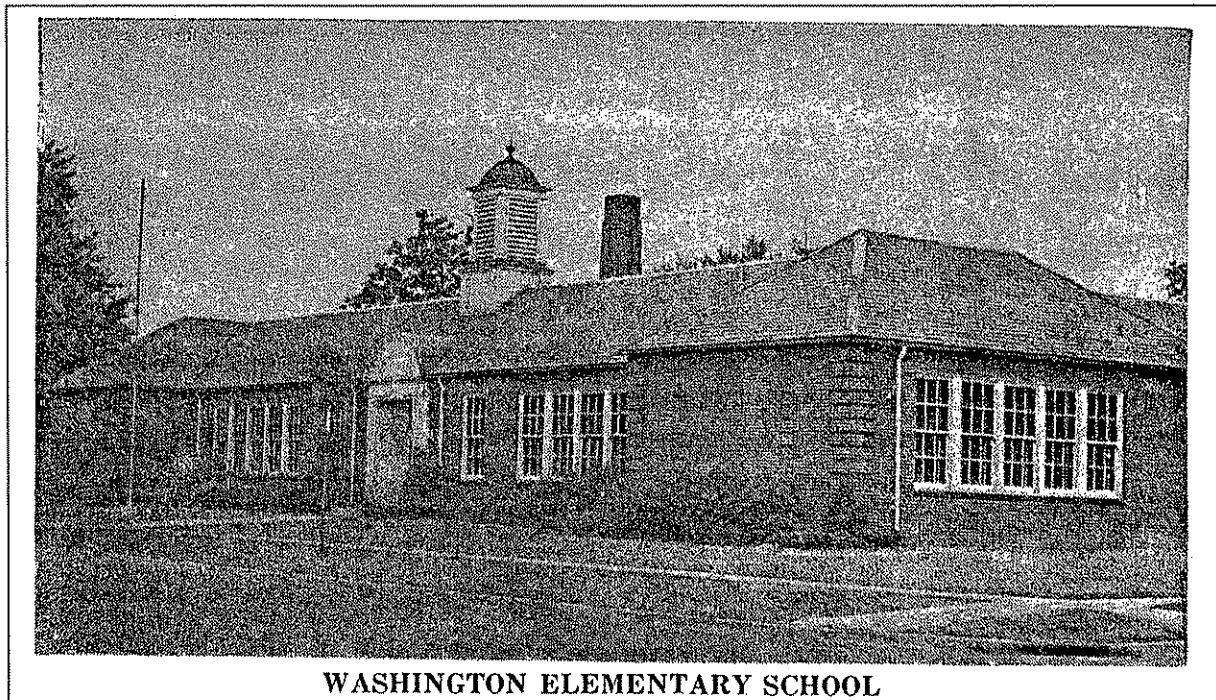


Photo c1940: Courtesy Pittsburg Genealogical Society Archives, Pittsburg City Library, Pittsburg, Kansas

City of Pittsburg, Kansas: Education

Key components for the growth and sustainability of the City of Pittsburg and Crawford County, Kansas were industry, transportation and immigration, all of which helped lead to the development of the above average educational system known as the USD 250 of Pittsburg, Kansas. The PWA funding received by USD 250 of Pittsburg came at a time of great importance. The mining industry suffered an economic downturn after the Great Depression yet the city itself managed to maintain its population base. Many of the schools in Pittsburg had been constructed in the late 1800s and were in serious need of modernization. Although some Kansas schools, as indicated in the MPS were under construction in 1930, most new school construction throughout the State of Kansas suffered an abrupt halt until well into the late 1930s.¹⁶ The construction of

¹⁶ National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation. "Historic Public Schools of Kansas." April 22, 2005, Section E, 22-24.

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the new and modern Washington Grade School in the southern section of the City of Pittsburg in 1937 attested to the community's recognition of the continuing importance of education.

The original town of Pittsburg was first laid out and platted in 1876 by a group of Joplin, Missouri businessmen and a Girard, Kansas lawyer by the name of Franklin Playter. The city grew around the introduction of the Girard and Joplin Railroad, later the St. Louis and San Francisco that was first built through Crawford County. In addition, three other lines added to the growth of Pittsburg; the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe, the Missouri Pacific and the Kansas City Southern making the location an ideal transportation center and railway junction. The town itself was laid out by Colonel E. H. Brown for Moffett and Sargent, a mining company that was then headquartered in Joplin, Missouri.¹⁷ The city was not incorporated until June 30, 1880.

As in the area of Joplin and Carthage Missouri, this southeastern region of Kansas was rich in iron, zinc and coal deposits. Mining became the main industry of the region. Miners from all over Europe were drawn to the mining regions throughout the United States. They brought their mining skills, along with their families, from their native countries to work in numerous mines and foundries throughout the country, including the mines of Pittsburg, Kansas.

With the growth of the mining industry in Crawford County, large numbers of immigrants from Southern Europe, as well as the Balkin regions were brought in to work in the mines.

Overseas, broadsides were distributed along the Mediterranean, promising prosperity in the coal fields of southeast Kansas. Steamship companies sent agents throughout Europe to enlist workers, underwriting one-way passage. From 1880 through 1915 huge waves of immigrants came to southeast Kansas. In all, over fifty nationalities came to mine coal and work in the area's smelters and other industries.¹⁸

Besides the very important factor in the growth of Crawford County, these immigrants were the main source of blue collar labor. In Pittsburg alone, there were 55 mining companies including zinc, lead and coal mines, that employed "...11,835 men in addition to many small operators and 44 new coal mines were opened. During the year ending September, 1904, about 700 new

¹⁷ History, City of Pittsburg, Online, www.pittks.org/index accessed October 30, 2007.

¹⁸ Randy Roberts, "Early Day Pittsburg Drew Rave Reviews," *The Pittsburg Morning Sun* 09 September 2001. Online http://www.morningsun.net/stories/090901/loc_0909010026.shtml

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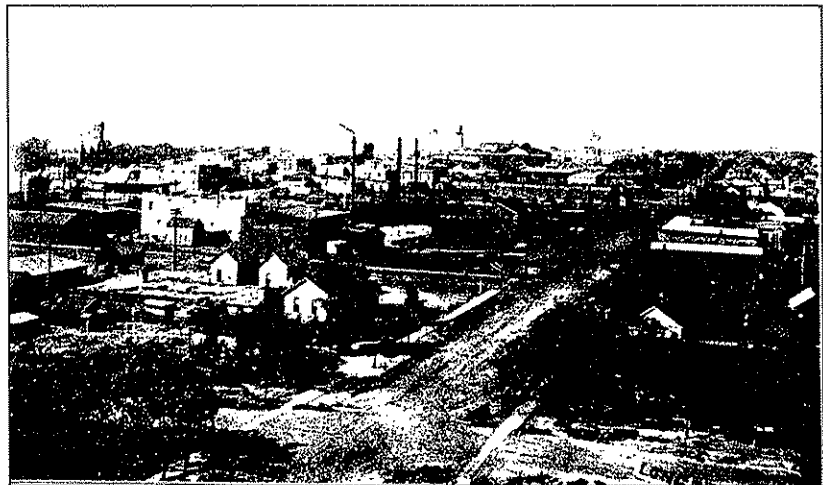
Washington Grade School
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dwelling houses were built and \$3,000,000 spent in public improvements."¹⁹ Smelting factories for the mining operations, with smoke stacks the towered over city streets, was another industry located in Pittsburg.

The largest group of immigrants arrived in Crawford County by 1910. The countries represented by the diverse immigrant population of Pittsburg were Italy, Austria, Germany, and the United Kingdom. By 1920 more families had arrived from the central European countries of Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Although most immigrant families lived in the rural areas of Crawford County, approximately 10% or 1,097 lived in the City of Pittsburg by the mid-1920s. Immigrant families put great value on the education of their children. As the city grew through the expansion of its various industries, transportation and a growing immigrant population, Pittsburg school system spent its first fifty years, 1887 through 1937, keeping pace with enrollment.²⁰

View looking north from second story of Washington School, 1888.

**Photo: Courtesy of Pittsburg
Genealogy Library, Pittsburg
Public Library, Pittsburg, Kansas.**



¹⁹ Ibid

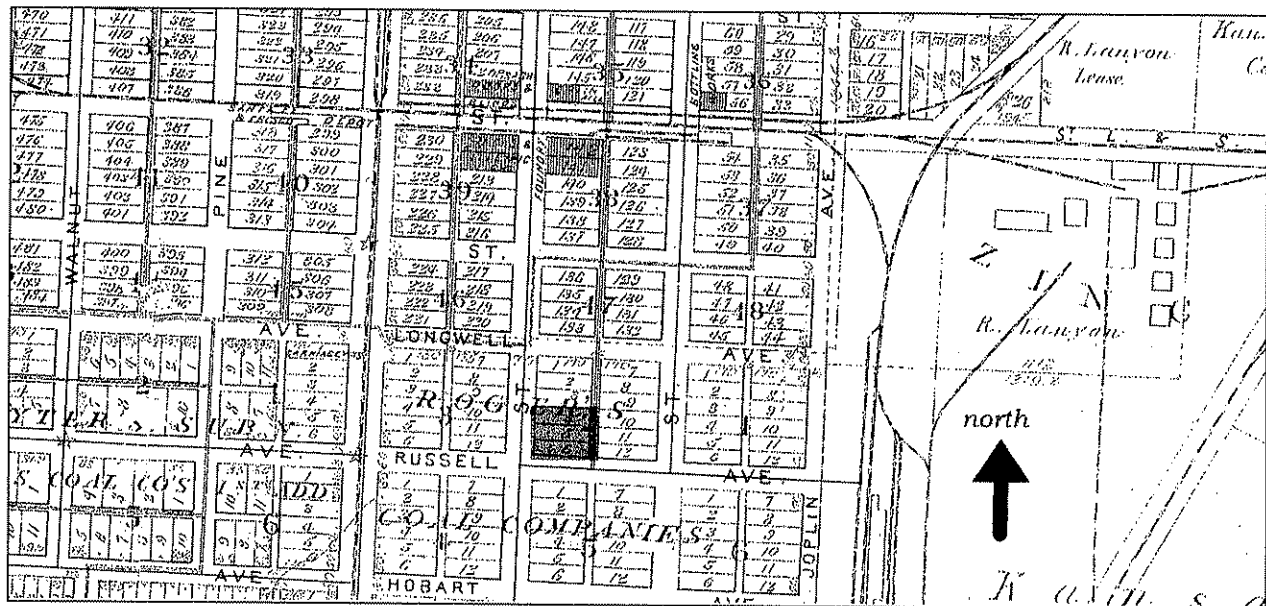
²⁰ European-Born Inhabitants in Crawford County from 1880-1940. "Pittsburg Almanac 1876-1976," 32A-32B. Archives. Pittsburg, Kansas Genealogical Society. Pittsburg KS. Public Library. The area of Pittsburg, known as Roger's Coal Company's First and Second Additions may have included company housing where employees of the mining company resided. Although the possibility exists, it could not be determined that company housing existed in the immediate area surrounding Washington Grade School.²⁰

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Map Section: "Roger's Coal Companies 1st and 2nd Additions." (Washington School in solid gray hi-lite).
C. S. Beadle. *Pittsburg, Kansas: Factories, Mines and Smelting Companies*. C. H. Everts & Co.: Philadelphia, PA., 1891.